THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) A scheme called the Exchange Risk Administration Scheme is being finalised by the IDBI.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The request is under consideration.

Rise in prices of essential Commodities

1680. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI. Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent report about continuing rise in the prices of essential commodities and in the inflation rate; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to curb the prices rise and inflation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The prices generally come under pressure during the first half of the financial year due to seasonal factors. The Wholesale Price Index has recorded an increase of 3.4 per cent since the end of March, 1988 upto 23rd July, 1988 which is the lowest rate of increase for this period in several years. While the prices of some items like rice, pulses and sugar have gone up, those of others like wheat and edible oils have registered a decline.

(b) The measures taken to curb the price rise include steps to optimise foodgrains production, strengthening of the Public Distribution System, imports and release of essential commodities like pulses and edible oils, strict economy in government expenditure, restraint on money supply growth selective credit controls and intensive action against profiteers and hoarders.

Treaty on Disclosure of illegal assets of Indians in Swiss banks

1681. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present stage of negotiations with the Swiss Government for a treaty or understanding on disclosure of illegal assets;

(b) what are the reasons for which Government have not so far invoked the existing Swiss Federal Act on International Mutual Assistance; and

(c) whether Government feel that some offences under the Indian laws have been committed by some persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) For obtaining mutual assistance in criminal matters, Government have decided that letters be exchanged between Governments of India and Switzerland. Our Mission in Berne has been suitably advised to make arrangements for the exchange of letters. Unless the proposed letters are exchanged between the two Governments, it is not feasible for the Government of India to apprach the Swiss Government for obtaining any information in this regard.

1682. [*Transferred to the 11th August*, 1988]

Changes in the existing guidelines on Foreign collaboration

1683. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make major changes in the existing guidelines on foreign collaboration to create a